Donald Trump launches ‘parting assault on the LGBT+ community’ by stripping discrimination protections

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Donald Trump has launched a “parting assault on the LGBT+ community” in America by stripping discrimination protections, days before he leaves office.

Amid the fallout from extremist riots at the US capitol, Trump’s Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has officially adopted new rules allowing recipients of federal HHS grants to discriminate against LGBT+ people in the name of religious freedom.

The final regulations, which were proposed in November, 2019, were released Thursday (7 January) in an 86-page document.

They roll back Obama-era rules which ban discrimination by those receiving grants from HHS against people on the basis of age, disability, sex, race, colour, national origin, religion, gender identity or sexual orientation.

The rules also rescind the requirement for HHS grantees to “treat as valid the marriages of same-sex couples”.

Now, the regulations read: “It is a public policy requirement of HHS that no person otherwise eligible will be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination in the administration of HHS programs and services, to the extent doing so is prohibited by federal statute.”

Except federal statute does not protect LGBT+ people from discrimination, therefore Trump has effectively given HHS grantees the green light to discriminate against people based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Where the HHS regulations used to require grantees to treat same-sex marriages as valid, they now read: “HHS will follow all applicable Supreme Court decisions in administering its award programs.”

While the change allow discrimination under the guise of “religious liberty” in healthcare services like HIV and STI prevention programs, opioid programs and youth homelessness services, adoption and fostering services also come under the HSS department.

If faith-based adoption and fostering services are funded by the government, they will be able to refuse to place children with families based on sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status, a change that religious conservatives have been pushing for.

Alphonso David, president of Human Rights Campaign, said in a statement: “At the 11th hour, the lame duck Trump-Pence administration has published its parting assault on the LGBT+ community via a federal regulation that would permit discrimination across the entire spectrum of HHS programs receiving federal funding.

“The Biden-Harris administration and Secretary Designate Xavier Becerra must urgently work to rescind this discriminatory regulation.”

https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2021/01/09/donald-trump-lgbt-discrimination-protections-health-human-services/